

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/543,860

Examiner

Naeem Haq

Applicant(s)

SMITH, STEPHEN

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to August 5, 2004.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-22 and 24-50.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 05 April 2000 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

This action is in response to the Applicant's amendment filed on August 5, 2004. November 23, 2004. Claims 23 and 51 have been canceled. Claims 1-22 and 24-50 are pending and will be considered for examination.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with James W. Proscia on December 10, 2004.

Enter new claim 1 as follows:

1. An online vehicle ordering and tracking system, comprising a processor operable to:
receive a computerized search request message from including:
at least one search criteria; and
a weighting of each criterion;

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search an inventory database for a product matching the product configuration data, the inventory database containing products on the order bank, in-production, in-transit, and in inventory;

store a computerized search reply message in a reply database;

communicate a computerized search reply message including:

a list of vehicles matching the at least one search criteria; and

a plurality of vehicle configuration parameters of the vehicles matching at least one search criteria, including vehicle identifier, make, model, dealer identifier, price, and color; and

receive a computerized tag request message comprising tagged vehicle parameters, the tagged vehicle parameters including:

the vehicle identifier;

a first dealer identifier of a first dealer having the tagged vehicle in inventory; and

a second dealer identifier of a second dealer selected by a customer from whom to purchase the tagged vehicle in the first dealer's inventory.

Enter new claim 17 as follows:

17. An online system enabling a user to search products, comprising a processor operable to:

receive a computerized search request message including:

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- at least one search criteria describing the parameters of a desired product;
- and
- a weighting of each criterion;
- search an inventory database for a product matching the product configuration data, the inventory database containing products on the order bank. in-production. in-transit, and in inventory;
- store a computerized search reply message in a reply database;
- communicate the computerized search reply message including:
 - a list of products matching at least one search criteria; and
 - a plurality of product configuration parameters of the products matching at least one search criteria;
- receive a computerized tag request message including:
 - order information associated with the tag request;
 - contact information of the user;
 - credit authorization information; and
 - tagged product parameters, the tagged product parameters including a product identifier, a first dealer identifier of a first dealer having the tagged product in inventory and a second dealer identifier of a second dealer selected by a customer from whom to purchase the tagged product in the first dealer's inventory; and
 - a tag request message generated in response to processing the tag request message.

Enter new claim 31 as follows:

31. An online method of communication for an online product ordering and tracking system, comprising:

generating a computerized search request message including at least one search criteria, the search criteria including a retailer identifier, and a weighting of each criterion;

generating a computerized search reply message in response to processing the search request message, the search reply message including a list of products matching at least one search criteria, including products in-inventory at the retailer identified by the retailer identifier as well as products in-transit to the retailer and in-process products; and

generating a computerized tag request message, the tag request message comprising tagged vehicle parameters, the tagged vehicle parameters comprising a vehicle identifier, a first dealer identifier of a first dealer having the tagged vehicle in inventory and a second dealer identifier of a second dealer selected by a customer from whom to purchase the tagged vehicle in the first dealer's inventory.

Enter new claim 45 as follows:

45. An online method of locating consumer product having specific configuration in an enterprise production pipeline and inventory, comprising:

generating a computerized search request message including product configuration data submitted by a user, the product configuration data including make and model of a vehicle, and a weighting of each parameter; and

formulating a computerized search query with search criteria corresponding to the product configuration data;

searching an inventory database for a product matching the product configuration data, the inventory database containing products on the order bank, in-production, in-transit, and in inventory;

generating a computerized search reply message in response to processing the search request message, the search reply message including a list of products matching at least one search criteria, each product having a plurality of configuration parameters;

displaying the list of products;

receiving a computerized tag request message submitted by the user, the tag request message containing a unique product identifier and tagged vehicle parameters, the tagged vehicle parameters comprising a first dealer identifier of a first dealer having the tagged product in inventory and a second dealer identifier of a second dealer selected by a customer from whom to purchase the tagged product in the first dealer's inventory;

modifying the product availability data associated with the product identified by the unique product identifier in the inventory database; and
generating a computerized tag reply message confirming the completion of tagging the identified product.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-22 and 24-50 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Statement of allowance is with reference to independent claims 1, 17, 31, and 45. All other claims are dependencies of these independent claims.

The present invention is directed to a system and method for ordering a configured product online. The independent claims 1, 17, 31, and 45 recite the patentable distinct feature that a customer selects a second dealer to purchase the product in a first dealer's inventory.

Discussion of most relevant prior art:

(i) US Patent 6,282,517 B1 to Wolfe et al discloses a system and method for ordering a configured product online. Wolfe fails to disclose or suggest that a second dealer, selected by a customer, purchases the product in a first dealer's inventory.

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(ii) Milligan, Brian "Push is on to shorten leadtimes for custom car orders", Purchasing , October 7, 1999 hereinafter referred to as Milligan. This article discloses custom ordering car. However, it fails to disclose or suggest that a second dealer, selected by a customer, purchases the product in a first dealer's inventory.

(iii) WO 97/03423 to Digital Equipment Corp. discloses a method and apparatus for computerized commerce. This reference fails to disclose or suggest that a second dealer, selected by a customer, purchases the product in a first dealer's inventory.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Naeem Haq whose telephone number is (703)-305-3930. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wynn W. Coggins can be reached on (703)-308-1344. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.


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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Naeem Haq, Patent Examiner
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December 12, 2004



KIPPEN W. COGGINS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600